

Claims:

1. A fibre channel analyser for analysing the operation of a fibre channel arbitrated loop (FC-AL) to which a plurality of devices are connectable, said analyser being adapted to be housed in an enclosure which, in use, houses at least one of said devices and comprising:

means for extracting data from the fibre channel,

means for processing extracted data; and

means for communicating processed data to an environmental control and monitoring unit through a secondary communication bus.

2. An analyser as claimed in claim 1 wherein the analyser is arranged to be included directly within a FC-AL enclosure thereby enabling continuous on-line monitoring of the FC-AL bus and the provision of an early warning system of FC-AL bus performance degradation.

3. An analyser as claimed in claim 1 wherein the analyser is adapted to provide information comprising a limited analysis of the FC-AL bus.

4. An analyser as claimed in claim 3 wherein said information comprises data indicative of the transmission of both ARB (Arbitrate) and LIP (Loop Initialisation) ordered sets.

5. An analyser as claimed in claim 1 wherein the analyser is arranged to be located on one of a number of branches from the FC-AL and not in the loop itself.

6. An analyser as claimed in claim 5 wherein the analyser is adapted to analyse activity occurring on the loop but does not itself contribute to loop delay.

5 7. An analyser as claimed in claim 1 wherein the analyser comprises not more than two integrated circuit chips.

8. An analyser as claimed in claim 1 wherein said environmental control and monitoring unit comprises an
10 Enclosure Services processor arranged to communicate with a bus controller through one of a SCSI Enclosure Services (SES) or a SCSI Access Fault Tolerant Enclosure (SAF-TE) protocol.

15 9. An analyser as claimed in claim 8 wherein said analyser is arranged to receive from said Enclosure Services processor a control page to enable a user to specify the levels of analysis of bus performance required; and to send to the Enclosure Services processor a status page containing
20 processed data results from the analysis performed by the bus analyser.